

FULBRIGHT FOREIGN STUDENT PROGRAM 2024-2025

Application Deadline: April 30, 2023

Application Link: <https://apply.iie.org/ffsp2024>

1. General Information

Applications open on **February 1st, 2023** and will close on **April 30, 2023**. **All applications must be submitted online at <https://apply.iie.org/ffsp2024>** . Please read this information carefully before starting your application. You will have approximately 12 weeks to complete your online application and will not be able to access the application for editing once it has been submitted. Prior to submission, open applications can be saved and updated as information (such as transcripts or certificates) become available.

Prospective Fulbright participants should be aware that public health conditions, availability of consular services and travel, as well as U.S. institutional operating status and policies may affect their ability to travel to the U.S. and participate in academic programs.

2. Eligibility

2.1. You must be a **Swati citizen OR a permanent resident** holding a valid passport issued by the government of Eswatini (Please note: Swati students who reside in the United States are not eligible to apply.)

2.2. You must wish to undertake study in the **United States** leading to a **Master's degree only**.

2.3. You must have an undergraduate (4 years) degree in any academic discipline.

2.4. All Applicants should:

- ✓ Have sufficient level of English proficiency to enable them to engage in graduate level study in the U.S.
- ✓ Be able to meet the minimum scores on required standardized tests such as the GRE and TOEFL (to be taken after a successful interview)
- ✓ Display academic excellence
- ✓ Be highly motivated and committed to completing the program as scheduled and to returning to Eswatini after the program
- ✓ Demonstrate leadership qualities
- ✓ Display a sense of social responsibility; be involved in extra-mural activities
- ✓ Have a desire to further Fulbright Alumni activities by giving back to your community/university upon returning
- ✓ Understand the cross-cultural sensitivity and flexibility needed to adjust successfully to life in the United States as a student.

2.5. Preference will be given to applicants who:

- ✓ Are living with a disability. Special accommodations like laptops or cell phones equipped with screen reading and note taking software, canes, and/or wheelchairs) will be made available to them while on their grant in the U.S.
- ✓ Are from under-served communities.
- ✓ Have not had recent and extensive experience in the U.S.

- ✓ Have not held a Fulbright Scholarship before
- ✓ Students already studying in the United States are NOT eligible

3. Timeline and Selection Process

Date	Milestone(s)
February 1, 2023	Application Opens
February 6-16, 2023	Fulbright Information Sessions
April 30, 2023	Application Deadline
May 1-June 1, 2023	Initial review of all the applications by the Eswatini Fulbright Selection Committee. * Potential candidates are shortlisted
June 6-June 9, 2023	Potential candidates are called for an interview at the Embassy. ** Eswatini Fulbright Selection Committee nominates successful candidates
June – Sept. 2023	Successful candidates take required standardized tests (GRE & TOEFL)
September 2023	Embassy submits final nominations with all submitted materials, test scores, transcripts and letters of recommendations to the Fulbright Foreign Services Board for further review.
October – Dec. 2023	Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FFSB) makes final Selections
January – March 2024	The Institute of International Education (IIE) makes final placement at a U.S. university
March – May 2024	Award acceptance, health clearance
May – June 2024	Visa interview and final preparations
July 2024	Pre-departure orientation and departure to U.S.

Please Note:

* Shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interviews in early June, 2023 and must be available to attend an in-person interview.

** A nomination by the Eswatini Fulbright Selection Committee does not guarantee your placement at a U.S. university. Final placement at a U.S. university will be determined by the Institute of International Education (IIE).

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

ACADEMIC MATERIALS

Upload copies of ALL post-high school transcripts. An uploaded transcript must include 3 components:

- a) Your transcript/s
- b) Your graduation certificate/s
- c) An explanation sheet on the grading system used by your university (usually found at the back of your transcripts)

Please note: All 3 components must be uploaded for each degree completed to date. Scan your transcripts, certificates and explanation sheet into one file before you upload them to the application system. ***Final selected applicants will be asked to hand in an original transcript and a certified copy of the certificate for each degree completed. These documents will be sent to the U.S. universities for verification of completion of the degrees.***

- Transcripts and certificates must be in English
- Upload as **.pdf** files using the file naming protocol ***Surname_Firstname_Document type (e.g. Msibi_Zwelakhe_Transcript BSc)*** is preferable.

TEST SCORES

GRE and TOEFL test scores are not required at this stage. If you have completed any of the required tests on your own before applying, you may upload with your application.

STUDY PLAN

For which degree objective are you applying:

- ✓ Master's
- ✓ Intended grant period: Master's 2 years;

STUDY/RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

This is an extremely important part of your application. It is the essence of why you want to study in the United States. They must be clearly written and outline the following:

- Be specific about your major field and specialized interests within this field.
- Explain why you are interested in this area.
- Describe the kind of program you expect to undertake
 - How does this fit into your educational background?
 - How does this fit into your future objectives and goals?
- How are your research interests relevant to current trends/challenges in Eswatini?
- How will you apply your studies upon returning to Eswatini country?
- Reason the academic objective should be achieved in the U.S.
- How study in the U.S. will enhance your knowledge, skills and understanding in your field of study and future career goals.

TIP: First formulate in a word document then upload to the application.

PERSONAL STATEMENT:

This is a narrative statement describing how you have achieved your current goals. It is an opportunity to ‘interview on paper’. What you do not tell us about yourself, we will never know. Promote your accomplishments but be concise.

The most important part of any university or scholarship application is the personal statement. A strong personal statement can set you apart from other applicants and give you a chance to explain how you meet the selection criteria.

Faculty members and scholarship selection committees want to know as much as they can about each applicant. Admissions exam scores, university degree results and letters of reference are all important indicators of an applicant’s academic potential. However, this information does not reveal much about the student’s character, motivation, future academic or career goals or why the applicant is interested in that field. The personal statement exists to allow applicants to convey something personal about themselves, and to convince the selection committee that the applicant is an especially attractive candidate.

GUIDELINES ON WRITING A PERSONAL STATEMENT FOR FULBRIGHT APPLICATIONS:

- Our best tip is for you to stop and think before you put pen to paper – do you know what your short and longer-term goals are? Are you yourself convinced that this program would help you fulfil these? It will be hard to convince a university if you don’t believe so yourself! Have you done enough research into selecting suitable university programs? Or researching the particular scholarship program? Are you convinced they are a good fit for you? Do you know what the admissions or selection criteria are? Is your CV updated?
- After you have all this necessary information for writing a personal statement, we encourage you to have a rigorous brainstorming session. Think about your personal statement as a marketing tool. You want to convey all your strengths, as they relate to the prompt provided and/or the selection criteria. We recommend making a list of the criteria and assigning 1-2 examples of how you have demonstrated these. Think of these as your talking points. Like a politician, no matter what you are asked in the personal statement or essay prompts you will try to address these in your application package. Cross off those that will be covered in other areas of your application. Arrange them into three themes: why me, why here and why now:
 - Why me: Connect the dots between your CV and transcript. What relevant preparation and experience (academic, extracurricular or work) do you bring to the program? Don’t just describe what you have done. Go beyond and talk about what you gained from these experiences and how this will make you an ideal student for the program.
 - Why here: Describe your academic fit for the Fulbright Foreign Student Program, your connection with its mission. Is there a concentration you would like to pursue? If there is not a separate research statement, talk in detail about your intended coursework.
 - Why now: What are your short/long-term goals? How does doing this program, at this time, help you fulfil these? And what will you do with this degree or participation in this program?

- Now you know what you want to say, consider how you will say it. Keep in mind that the personal statement is a creative writing piece. You will also want to have an introduction, conclusion, and theme connecting your points. Have a look at some online sample personal statements in your field to get a sense of the typical style.
- Write an introduction: You will notice many students start with a personal anecdote or quotation that illustrates their motivation for studying their degree. This shows the reader a bit more about yourself and can create a theme connecting paragraphs.
- Write a conclusion: Be sure to wrap up your personal statement. What is the main message the reader should take away? Can you connect this back to the theme you introduced in the first paragraph? Try to end on a powerful and positive note.
- Other important rules of thumb to keep in mind when composing your personal statement include:
 - Address the personal statement specifications fully
 - Use clear, concise language – say what you mean
 - Avoid vague or empty statements, clichés and cultural references that may not translate well to a U.S. audience
 - Proofread your work and ask several individuals to proofread your personal statement and offer their feedback (grammar and spelling mistakes will reflect poorly upon your level of effort)
 - Avoid too much overlap with other sections of your application package
 - Address any gaps or weaknesses in your application or academic performance – turn them into a positive if you can

TIP: First formulate in a word document then upload to the application.

PLAGIARISM POLICY

Fulbright Foreign Student Program is implementing a zero-tolerance plagiarism policy. It follows the Oxford English Dictionary's definition of plagiarism: *Plagiarism is the wrongful appropriation or purloining and publication as one's own, of the ideas, or the expression of the ideas of another.* Application materials will be processed using software to help identify any instance of plagiarism. If plagiarism appears in any part of the application, it may result in the nominee's disqualification from participation in the program. ECA and IIE will review all applications that are flagged for plagiarism and make a final determination on the applicant's status.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Three reference letters are required. The reference letter is an extremely important part of your application. It gives the selection committee further insight into getting to know you through the eyes of your professor or employer and plays a big part in the final selection of a candidate.

Reference letters are confidential. Therefore, all applicants must register their recommenders so that their recommenders can receive and return the reference via the online system. You will need the name, title and email address of your three referees.

Choose referees who know you well, and whom you have studied or worked with.

TIP: Identify your referees before you start filling out the application form so that they have enough time to submit their reference before the deadline.

ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

- Curriculum Vitae

FULBRIGHT PROGRAM CONTACTS IN ESWATINI:

U.S. Embassy, Eswatini: MartinsSC@state.gov

Website: <https://sz.usembassy.gov/education-culture/fulbright-program/>

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Ensure your application is complete prior to submitting online. **Once submitted, an application cannot be edited.**

A complete application consists of:

Required Items	Completed?
Application Form	
Study Research Objective	
Personal Statement	
Reference One	
Reference Two	
Reference Three	
Passport Bio page (or ID for now)	
Transcript/s	
Grade explanation sheet	
Certificates	
Curriculum Vitae	

Completed applications with all supplemental documents must be submitted through the online system by **April 30, 2023**.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.